

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MFA'S KAPITSA DISCUSSES EAST ASIAN ISSUES

REF: (A) 77 MOSCOW 18046 (NOTAL), (B) LENINGRAD 531 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SOVIET MFA'S CHIEF, FIRST FAR EAST DEPT. KAPITSA
PRESENTED A BLEAK READOUT ON SINO-SOVIET BORDER NEGOTIA-
TIONS; DEFENDED SOVIET CLAIM TO NORTHERN TERRITORIES;

INDICATED LOW-KEY MOSCOW REACTION TO PFT SIGNING; CASTIGATED CHINESE SEA POLICY; STATED U.S. HAS A ROLE IN SEA; DOWNPLAYED SOVIET-VIETNAMESE TIES; AND PREDICTED NOTHING WAS LIKELY TO HAPPEN ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. KAPITSA'S STATEMENT ON SINO-JAPANESE PFT SIGNING INDICATED MOSCOW ALSO SEES WHICH WAY WIND IS BLOWING ON PFT AND WILL BE INTERESTED IN LIMITING LONG-TERM DAMAGE OF PFT SIGNING ON SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. AUSTRALIAN DCM HAS GIVEN US FOLLOWING READOUT ON MAR. 2 CALL BY AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR ON CHIEF, MFA'S FIRST FAR EAST DEPT. M. S. KAPITSA. AUSTRALIAN SOURCE HAS ASKED THAT WE RETAIN THIS MESSAGE IN U.S. CHANNELS SINCE HIS AMBASSADOR HAS TEMPORARILY DEFERRED REPORTING THE MEETING. SEPTTEL REPORTS PARTS OF THE KAPITSA CONVERSATION RELATED TO KHMER-VIETNAMESE BORDER CONFLICT.

2. SINO-SOVIET: KAPITSA ADOPTED NORMAL SOVIET DEFENSIVE POSTURE ON SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE, UNDERLINING MOSCOW'S "REASONABLENESS" ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES. AS DURING CALL BY DUTCH AMBASSADOR LAST DECEMBER (REF A), HE BEGAN BY NOTING THAT SINO-SOVIET STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS ARE "NORMAL", FROM MOSCOW'S POINT OF VIEW, BUT COULD BE "MORE ACTIVE." HE STATED THAT MFA ARRANGED CALLS ON GROMYKO AND KOSYGIN BY THE NEW CHINESE AMBASSADOR. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE PRC EMBASSY HAD NOT ASKED AND MFA HAD NOT OFFERED CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE CALLS.

3. KAPITSA REVIEWED SOVIET POSITION ON THE BORDER PROBLEM, COMMENTING THAT:
-- IN 1963, NEGOTIATIONS ON RIVER BOUNDARIES FOCUSED ON SETTLEMENT ON BASIS OF TAVEG PRINCIPLE. MOSCOW AGREED TO CHINESE SOVEREIGNTY OVER SIX HUNDRED ISLANDS, INCLUDING DAMANSKIY ISLAND. HOWEVER, THE CHINESE "WERE IN NO HURRY TO AGREE." KAPITSA CLAIMED THE CHINESE ATTITUDE SUGGESTED PEKING DESIRED TO USE SINO-SOVIET BORDER DIFFERENCES AS A "CONCRETE BASIS" FOR THE "POLITICAL STRUGGLE" THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP WAS ATTEMPTING TO GENERATE INSIDE THE PRC.
-- THE CHINESE WANT SOVIET ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT 335,000 SQUARE KM ARE IN "DISPUTE." THE SOVIET UNION, HOWEVER, "DOES NOT NEED CHINA TO TELL IT WHERE ITS BOUNDARIES ARE."
-- THE SOVIET UNION IS WILLING TO SIT DOWN AND EXAMINE PARTICULAR AREAS ON THE BASIS OF HISTORICAL EVIDENCE. IT IS NOT PREPARED IN ADVANCE OF SIGNATURE TO RECOGNIZE "DISPUTED" AREAS.

4. ON RECENT NAVIGATION AGREEMENT, KAPITSA HELD MOSCOW

AGREED TO ALLOW CHINESE USE OF THE CHANNEL OPPOSITE
Khabarovsk since the Chinese agreed to (A) obey Soviet
navigation regulations and (B) refrain from using the
accord as a means for advancing Chinese territorial claims.

5. COMMENT: KAPITSA DID NOT MENTION POSSIBLE IL'ICHEV
VISIT TO PEKING REPORTED REF B. IN FEB. 22 MEETING WITH
EMBOFF, MFA CHINA SPECIALIST I. T. KALABUKOV DENIED
THAT IL'ICHEV IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO PEKING, WHILE
NOTING THAT, LIKE FORMER U.S.-PRC WARSAW TALKS, SINO-
SOVIET BORDER NEGOTIATIONS ARE OFTEN "RECESSED" TO RESUME
AT A TIME MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TO BOTH SIDES. END COMMENT.

6. JAPAN: KAPITSA SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS PRE-
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VIOUSLY WILLING TO GIVE JAPAN TWO OF THE FOUR ISLANDS
IN THE SOUTHERN KURILES. HOWEVER, TWENTY-TWO YEARS LATER,

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THE SOVIET UNION HAS GROWN "ATTACHED" TO THESE ISLANDS
AND HAS DEVELOPED THEM ECONOMICALLY. THE SOVIET PUBLIC
WOULD NOT "UNDERSTAND" IF THEY WERE GIVEN BACK. JAPAN
HAS A CHOICE, HE DECLARED: PURSUING ITS TERRITORIAL CLAIM
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OR DEVELOPING "REAL" JAPANESE-SOVIET ECONOMIC RELATIONS.
KAPITSA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT FOR THE PRESENT MOSCOW "NEEDS"
JAPAN ECONOMICALLY, BUT ARGUED AS WELL THAT IN THE
FUTURE THE JAPANESE ECONOMY WILL NEED SIBERIAN RESOURCES.

7. KAPITSA'S RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON MOSCOW'S REACTION
TO SINO-JAPANESE PFT SIGNING WAS THE LOWEST KEY WE HAVE
HEARD FROM ANY SOVIET SO FAR. HE ANSWERED THAT THERE
WOULD BE NO PROBLEM IF JAPAN GAVE AN ASSURANCE THAT THE
TREATY WAS NOT DIRECTED AT THE SOVIET UNION, "FOR
EXAMPLE AT THE TIME OF SIGNING." MOREOVER, KAPITSA SAID,
THE SOVIET UNION KNOWS THAT THE JAPANESE DO NOT LIKE THE
CLAUSE BUT "THE OTHERS" ARE INSISTING ON IT.

8. SOUTHEAST ASIA: KAPITSA CRITICIZED CHINA FOR
ATTEMPTING TO CULTIVATE GOVERNMENTS OF SMALLER NATIONS
LIKE THAILAND, BURMA AND MALAYSIA AT THE STATE-TO-STATE
LEVEL WHILE SUPPORTING INSURGENCIES AGAINST THESE SAME
GOVERNMENTS AT ANOTHER LEVEL. HE STATED THAT
VIETNAM AND INDONESIA ARE THE ONLY TWO SEA COUNTRIES THAT
CAN RESIST, BUT THAT "THEY MAY BE RIVALS ONE DAY." BANGLA-
DESH IS ALSO "VULNERABLE." SEA MIGHT SOME DAY FIND CHINA
AT THE STRAITS OF MALACCA," HE SAID.

9. ASKED IF THE U.S. COULD PLAY A "STABILIZING" ROLE IN
THIS SITUATION, KAPITSA ARTFULLY AGREED THAT THE U.S.
MAY IN THE FUTURE BE OBLIGED "TO DEFEND THE SEA WING OF
CAPITALISM." THIS, HE ADDED, WOULD BE "USEFUL." KAPITSA
CONTINUED THAT THE PROBLEM IN SEA IS THE "PEASANT."
THERE ARE THINGS THE U.S. CAN DO IN THIS REGARD, LIKE
HELPING LAND REFORM TO SUCCEED. BUT THE "PEASANT" PROBLEM
WILL GO ON FOR "FIFTY YEARS." KAPITSA ALSO RECALLED THAT
SINGAPORE'S LEE KUAN YEW ONCE ASKED KOSYGIN IF THE SOVIET
UNION COULD CONTRIBUTE TO A "GREAT POWER BALANCE" IN

WOUTHEAST ASIA. KOSYGIN, HE SAID, REPLIED THAT MOSCOW DOES NOT WISH TO SEE AN "IMPERIALIST" PRESENCE IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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AREA, NOR DOES IT WISH TO BE PRESENT ITSELF. HOWEVER, IF COUNTRIES IN THE REGION WISHED TO ENHANCE THEIR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES AGAINST THE U.S., JAPAN OR CHINESE "IMPERIALISM", THE SOVIET UNION WOULD HELP.

9. VIETNAM AND LAOS: KAPITSA SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY CLOSE SOVIET TIES WITH HANOI. HE DESCRIBED SOVIET-SRV RELATIONS AS "FRIENDLY." THE SOVIET UNION, HE CONTENTED, PROVIDES NO MILITARY PERSONNEL OTHER THAN THOSE FOR THE MILITARY ACADEMY AND SOME "TECHNICAL" SPECIALISTS. SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS DO NOT VISIT VIETNAM. HE STATED THE SOVIETS HAD NOT SOUGHT AND THE VIETNAMESE HAVE NOT OFFERED ANY FACILITIES. KAPITSA DODGED A QUESTION ON WHAT MOSCOW WOULD DO IF THE VIETNAMESE OFFERED NAVAL FACILITIES. HE SHRUGGED OFF THE PAVLOVSKIY VISIT TO LAOS AS PROTOCOLARY.

10. KOREA: KAPITSA SAID THE SOVIET UNION, CHINA AND THE U.S. OPPOSE A RENEWED WAR IN KOREA. ROK PRESIDENT PARK MIGHT DESIRE A WAR, BUT THE U.S. WILL NOT LET HIM START ONE. THE GUERRILLA WARFARE THAT REUNITED VIETNAM WOULD NOT SUCCEED IN KOREA.

11. MOSCOW TAKES THE VIEW THAT THE DPRK SHOULD WORK FOR PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION BY BUILDING A SUPERIOR SOCIETY IN THE NORTH. HE CONCLUDED BY DOUBTING WHETHER KIM IL-SONG COULD PRESENT CHINA AND THE USSR WITH A WAR BY FAIT ACCOMPLI, AND HE PREDICTED THAT NOTHING WAS LIKELY TO HAPPEN ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

12. COMMENT: AS EVIDENCED BY HIS COMMENTS ON GENERAL PAVLOVSKIY'S VISIT TO LAOS, KAPITSA CAN BE LESS THAN

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CANDID AT TIMES. KAPITSA HAS ALSO OCCASIONALLY MISINTERPRETED THE SOVIET POSITION ON SOME ISSUES. AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR, HE TOLD A SINGAPOREAN DIPLOMAT HERE THAT THE SOVIET UNION COULD NOW "ACCEPT" ASEAN. MOSCOW TO DATE
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HAS NOT. NEVERTHELESS, KAPITSA'S REMARKS REPRESENT HIGH LEVEL MFA VIEWS AND, AS SUCH, CONSTITUTE A GOOD INDICATION OF OFFICIAL SOVIET POSITIONS.

13. KAPITSA'S STATEMENT ON A POSSIBLE LOW-KEY SOVIET REACTION TO THE SINO-JAPANESE PFT DESERVES SPECIAL NOTE. IT COMES AT A TIME WHEN THE SOVIET PRESS IS ALTERNATELY CAJOLING THE JAPANESE TO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF THE SOVIET DRAFT TREATY AND (ONDEMNING TOKYO FOR RAISING "SO-CALLED TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS;" EVINCING AN "APPARENT RAPPROCHEMENT" WITH CHINA THROUGH POSSIBLE CONCLUSION OF SINO-JAPANESE PFT (WHICH FEB. 28 APN COMMENTARY STATES WILL SIGNAL JAPAN'S "APPROVAL" OF PEKING'S "ANTI-SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY"); EMBARKING ON THE ROAD OF "MILITARISM" THROUGH INCREASED MILITARY SPENDING; AND ALLOWING U.S.

MILITARY FORCES TO USE JAPANESE SOIL FOR THE LARGE U.S.-
ROK MILITARY EXERCISES UNDERWAY IN SOUTH KOREA. WHILE
WE STILL BELIEVE SINO-JAPANESE PFT SIGNING WILL PRODUCE
ANOTHER TROUGH IN SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS, KAPITSA'S
COMMENT INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS:
-- ALSO SEE WHICH WAY THE WIND IS NOW BLOWING ON THE PFT;
AND
-- MAY BE INTERESTED IN LIMITING THE LONG-RANGE DAMAGE
OF PFT ON SOVIET-JAPANESE AFFAIRS, ONCE IT IS SIGNED.
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